



Information for parents and students

Objective

To ensure a complaint lodged by a member of the Christ Church community will be resolved in a prompt and professional manner.

Policy

Should the School receive a complaint, staff will make every effort to resolve the issue quickly and fairly.

If the issue is unable to be resolved, the complainant may forward a written complaint to the Principal.

The Chair of Council will handle a complaint lodged against the Principal.

An Independent Arbitrator will handle a complaint lodged against the Chair of Council.

What constitutes a complaint?

A complaint is an expression of dissatisfaction with a real or perceived problem.

A complaint may be made if a parent or carer thinks that the school has, for example:

- Done something wrong, not followed school procedures;
- Failed to do something it should have done; or
- Acted unfairly or impolitely.

A complaint may be made about the school as a whole, about a specific department in the school or about an individual member of staff.

Key principles for the handling of complaints

A complaint received from either a parent, carer or a student will be handled with:

Commitment

Christ Church recognises your right to complain and to have your complaint dealt with seriously and in a positive manner.

Fairness

The School understands the need to be fair in its complaints handling processes and will act with a lack of bias. People whose interests will be affected by the decision will be given a chance to respond before a decision is made, but after all important information has been gathered.

Resources

The School will provide adequate resources for effective handling of complaints. An authorised person will conduct a formal examination and investigation of the complaint and/or areas of disputation.

Costs

There will be no charge to the complainant for the raising of a complaint.

Openness

The School is open to the concerns of parents and students.

Confidentiality

The School will treat all complaints in a confidential manner and with respect. Complaints made by parents must not rebound adversely on their children and similarly, complaints raised by the students should not rebound on them or on other students.

Records

The School will maintain clear confidential records of the complaint, the actions taken and the outcome because:

- It may become the cause of future legal action;
- Patterns in the record may indicate a need for action;
- The Principal should be able to check the record if necessary

The record should contain the following information:

- Date when the issue was raised;
- name of parent;
- name of pupil;
- brief statement of issue;
- simple but clear notes of all conversations with parents about any source of dissatisfaction;
- location of detailed file;
- name of the member of staff handling the issue; and
- brief statement of outcome.

Records concerning students will be kept for seven (7) years after the student reaches eighteen (18) years of age.

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 2 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	

Accessibility

The Complaints Policy and Procedures document is available from the School website at www.ccgswa.edu.au

Communication methods

The School will accept complaints lodged verbally by phone or by fax, letter or email.

Assistance

Upon request, the School will provide a complainant with the support needed to formulate and lodge a complaint. The School will also provide support for staff against whom a complaint is made.

Responsiveness

Complaints will be dealt with quickly and efficiently and those who have raised them are kept informed about progress.

Recurring complaints

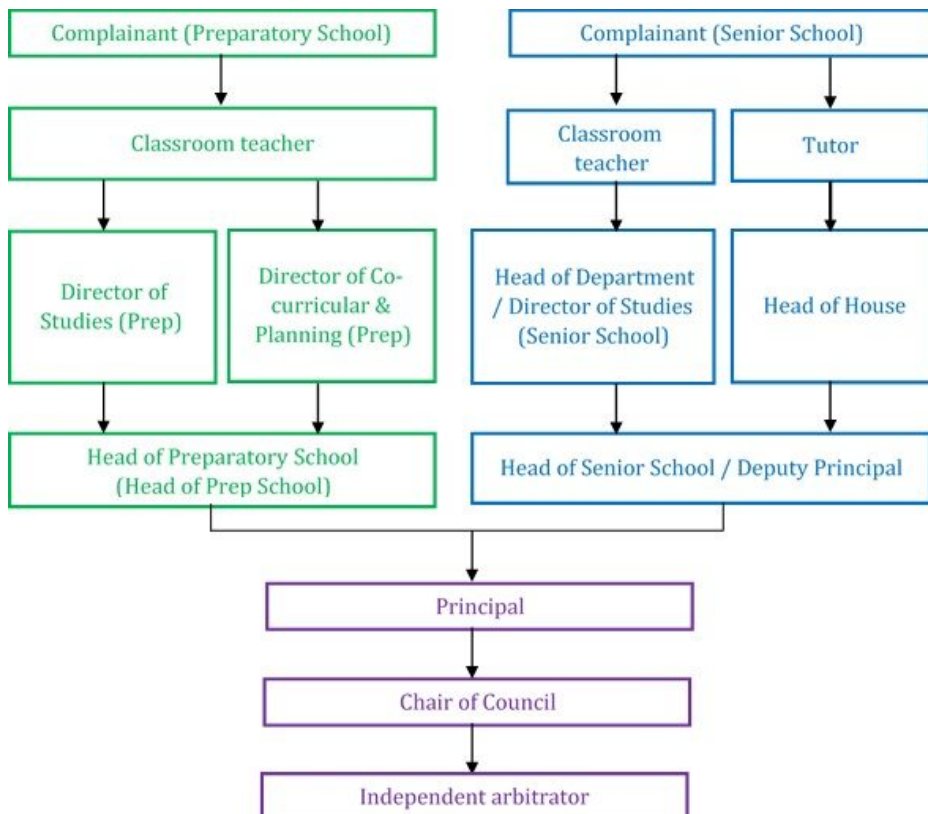
Recurring complaints will be identified, analysed and addressed.

Results

Where a complaint results in the identification of changes that need to be made to School procedures, those changes will be made and notification that action has been taken communicated in writing to the complainant. The School is not obliged to inform the complainant of the details of the action taken.

Review

The School will review its complaints handling process annually.



Minimum information required when making a complaint^[1]

You should provide the following information when making a complaint:

- Your name and contact details
- The nature of the complaint
- Copies of any relevant correspondence or documents relating directly to the complaint
- What you consider may be required to resolve the complaint

Anonymous complaints

Anonymous complaints may be where there is no name or address supplied, or where the complainants say they do not wish to be identified.

Parents and students are encouraged to give their names and given reassurance on the issue of confidentiality. If they persist in wishing to remain anonymous, it is at the Principal's discretion as to what action, if any, will be taken, depending on the nature of the complaint.

Response time

In the case of a verbal complaint, where you do not want to be specifically identified, staff will endeavour to work directly with you to resolve the matter as quickly as possible.

The School will acknowledge written complaints within five school days. We will seek to resolve complaints within 10 days. In all cases, you will be kept informed of the progress of your complaint.

Queries regarding the progress of the complaint

You may enquire as to the progress of your complaint at any time by contacting the appropriate person directly. At the time of lodging a verbal complaint, or in the acknowledgment letter for a written complaint, this person will be identified to you.

Outcome of a complaint

The outcome of all written complaints will be provided to you in writing.

When a complainant is unhappy with the outcome of a complaint

If you are dissatisfied with the School's attempts to resolve your complaint, you may wish to express your concerns to the Principal.

This request can be made verbally; however, it is preferred in writing.

Written complaints should be addressed:

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Principal

PO Box 399

CLAREMONT WA 6910

Serious complaints will be shared with the Chairman of the School Board by the Principal. There may be certain circumstances, such as complaints about the Principal or a Board member, when the parents need to direct their complaint in writing to the Chairman. This should be addressed:

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Chairman of the School Council

PO Box 399

CLAREMONT WA 6910

Complaints about the Chairman may be addressed to:

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL

The Visitor

Anglican Church

Diocese of Perth

PO Box W2067

PERTH WA 6846

Where required, the School will refer the matter to an external authority, e.g. the Department for Child Protection or the Western Australian Police Service for advice or immediate action. In this situation, the Principal, or in his absence, the next most senior staff member, must take responsibility for action in the School and the Chairman of the School Council informed as soon as possible.

Intractable complaints

Most complaints can be resolved if approached positively. A complaint may become intractable, due to its nature or to the way in which it was handled, or possibly because the parent perceives the school to have 'closed ranks' against him or her.

Intractable complaints are usually taken to the Chairman of the School Council.

- Referral to the Chair of the School Governing Body

In some cases the Principal will refer the matter to the Chairman of the School Board and informs the parents that this stage has been reached. However, a situation may arise where the complainant is unhappy with the Principal's response. In this case the parent should write directly to the Chairman.

The Chairman will discuss the matter fully with the Principal and be provided with relevant documentation. If a briefing is required from a member of staff, this should occur in the presence of the Principal.

The Chairman will then respond to the parents, notifying them that he is reviewing the matter, asking them if they wish to add anything further and provide a date by which they may expect a response.

The Chairman's response should be clear and detailed, and should offer a meeting if the parents remain troubled.

- Meeting with the Chairman of the School Council

If a meeting is requested, the Chairman would offer to meet the parents at a time convenient to them. Those

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 5 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	

involved are:

- the Chairman of the School Council
- the Principal and, at the most, one other member of staff
- the parents

Parents are permitted to bring with them a supportive friend who is not involved with the complaint.

The Chairman, will listen to the parents and the Principal, in the hope that a solution may be found. If this is not possible, and the parents wish to take the matter further, may wish to seek the advice of an independent arbitrator.

- Referral to an arbiter

As a final step in the disputes and complaints procedure, if appropriate, the school may choose to use an independent arbiter to resolve the issue. The arbiter would have to be:

- Agreed by both parties
 - Remunerated by both parties (if appropriate)
 - Assured both parties will accept the arbiter's decision.
- Further action

At all stages of a complaints resolution procedure the complainant should be reminded that they can seek legal advice if they wish, especially at the point where the school has done all it can to reach a resolution.

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 6 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	

Information for parents

Christ Church Grammar School welcomes suggestions and comments from parents and takes seriously complaints and concerns that may be raised.

A complaint will be treated as an expression of genuine dissatisfaction that needs a response.

We wish to ensure that:

- parents wishing to make a complaint understand the process
- we respond to complaints within a reasonable time and in a courteous and efficient way
- parents realise that we listen and take complaints seriously
- we take action where appropriate.

“How should I complain?”

Members of staff will be happy to help. It may be best to start with the person most closely concerned with the issue – for example, your son’s tutor, Head of House, the classroom teacher, sports concerns with the Head of Physical Education. They may be able to sort things out quickly, with the minimum of fuss. However, you may prefer to take the matter to a more senior member of staff, for example the Deputy Principal, Head of Senior School, Head of Preparatory School or the Principal.

“I don’t want to complain as such, but there is something bothering me”

The school is here for you and your child, and we want to hear your views and your ideas. Contact a member of staff, as described above.

“I am not sure whether to complain or not”

If as parents you have concerns, you are entitled to raise them. If in doubt, you should the contact the school, as we are here to help.

“What will happen next?”

If you raise something face-to-face or by telephone, it may be possible to resolve the matter immediately and to your satisfaction.

If you have made a complaint or suggestion in writing, we will contact you within five working days, to respond to your concerns and explain how we propose to proceed.

In many circumstances, the person you contact will need to discuss the matter with a colleague and consider it further before responding. You will be given a date by which time you will receive a response. If a detailed exploration of the issue is needed, a letter or report will be sent to you as quickly as possible. This will tell you of the outcome of your complaint. It will explain the conclusion, the reasons for it, and any action taken or proposed.

Parents need to be aware that in some cases the school will not be able to discuss the details of action taken as it would be inappropriate. For example if the action involved staff discipline.

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 7 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	

“What happens about confidentiality?”

Your complaint or concern will be treated in a confidential manner and with respect. Knowledge of it will be limited to the Principal and those directly involved. The Chair of the School Council may also need to be informed. It is the school’s policy that complaints made by parents should not rebound adversely on their children.

We cannot entirely rule out the need to make third parties outside the school aware of the complaint and possibly also the identity of those involved. This would only be likely to happen where, for example, a child’s safety was at risk or it become necessary to refer matters to the Police. You would be fully informed in this process.

While information relating to specific complaints will be kept confidentially on file, we would point out that anonymous complaints might not be pursued.

“What if I am not satisfied with the outcome?”

We hope that you will feel satisfied with the outcome, or at least that your concerns have been fully and fairly considered.

If you are not satisfied, the Principal will offer to refer the matter to the Chairman of the School Council. Alternatively, you may wish to write directly to the Chairman. The Chairman will call for a full report from the Principal, and will examine matters thoroughly before responding. This may result in a satisfactory solution, but if it does not, the Chairman will invite you to a meeting. You may wish to be supported by a friend, but legal representation would not be appropriate at this stage.

If the meeting does not bring about a resolution, the matter would be referred to an independent arbiter. It is their task to look at the issues in an impartial and confidential manner. You will be asked if there any papers you would like to have circulated beforehand. As with the Chairman’s meeting, you will be invited to bring a friend with you.

The school recognises and acknowledges your entitlement to complain and we hope to work with you in the best interests of the children and young people in our care.

Information for students

How do I make a complaint?

- By talking about it – or by writing it down if you find that easier.
- You can do it by yourself, or as part of a group, or through your parents.

To whom?

- To any staff member with whom you feel comfortable with.

Does it matter what the issue is?

- No, it can be a big problem or a small one. By discussing it, you may come up with some positive ideas.

What will happen next?

- If possible, the staff member to whom you have made the complaint will deal with it in person. If not, he or she will go on your behalf to someone who can help.

Do others have to know?

- If you are worried about confidentiality, tell the staff member – they will understand.

Even if you find the issue hurtful or embarrassing, don't worry – it will only be discussed by staff, who can help you.

Full fee overseas students

Overseas students

Overseas students and parents are required to access the internal complaints process within 20 working days. If the student chooses not to access the process or withdraws from the process, or the process is completed and results in a decision supporting the School, the Admissions Registrar must notify the Secretary of DEEWR through PRISMS of the student not achieving the satisfactory course progress as soon as practicable.

Independent mediator/conciliator for overseas student – internal process

The Department of Education Services offers a free mediation/conciliation service through the Overseas Student Conciliator. The conciliator assists to resolve disputes between overseas students and the School, as part of the internal complaints and appeals procedure.

If either a student, parent or member of staff would like to discuss a particular case with an independent person, they may contact conciliator Ms Anne Duncan either by telephone on (08) 9441 1953, facsimile (08) 9441 1950 or via email at anne.duncan@des.wa.gov.au.

The conciliator is able to discuss issues of concern at any stage of the internal complaints and appeals procedure. However, she will not become actively involved in the case until the parties have attempted to resolve the dispute themselves and that attempt has failed.

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 9 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	

Overseas Students Ombudsman – external process

In the event of an overseas student being dissatisfied with the result or conduct of the internal complaint appeals process, the School will advise the student of his right to access the external appeals process by contacting the Overseas Students Ombudsman at www.oso.gov.au or phone 1300 362 072. This service is free and independent for external appeals and complaints about decisions made by the School.

Should the sanction imposed by the School be suspension or expulsion, the student's enrolment and provision of relevant course content will be maintained whilst the complaints and appeals process is underway.

[1] Complaints judged to be vexatious, trivial or without substance, or where it is judged not to warrant further action, will not be progressed. You will be advised of this decision in writing.

Document title: Complaints policy and procedures	CRICOS: 00433G	Page 10 of 10
Custodian of document: Deputy Principal	Date last updated: November 8, 2018	